

The Trade Rat Mine

By Eustace V. Bray

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If the tourist or the tramp straying from the direct route between Marysville and Oroville chanced to wander for awhile along a well-defined trail on the banks of a brawling branch of the Feather river, he is pretty sure to come upon a weather-beaten cabin and to be surprised by the singular object under a glass case that may be seen through its only window. Sometimes the curious traveler also gets a glimpse of the occupant of this lonely abode, a stout, bent old man with hair and beard and shaggy brows of silvery whiteness.

But there is a kindly gleam in the honest blue eyes beneath those shaggy brows, unimpassioned eyes yet by no long years that have frayed the thin hair and patened the beard, and are traced by the strange personality of the refugee and the romance of his surroundings. Visitors have often vainly tried to win his confidence sufficiently to draw from him the particulars that have become embossed into the crevices of this strange den.

Horace Robb, though accustomed from boyhood to live and make out for himself, was no means above a hermit, showing his kind. He came to California in the early fifties, but a pioneer, left a follower in the track of the earliest settlers, for gold. Youth enthusiasm, restlessness, energy and determination to win a fortune for her whom he had left behind were his incentives to untiring effort, but they did not bring success. The creation of the emigrant. It seemed to him the shadows of the past. Now, and again, he found a smile or face just enough to keep him on the move.

Finally, lost for the time of roaming, he relocated an abandoned place claim on the blanched branch of the Feather river, inflicting with it a deserted cabin and its meager belongings of rude table, stool and bench, and rags, pots and pans. He straightened up the rickety door, cleared out the spring, and installed his stock of bacon, beans and potatoes. Then he settled down to days of weary tramping with pick and pan and nights of deep and dreamless sleep.

For the second day of his sojourn, Robb had found sticks, paddles and other trash among his beams and attributed the alteration to a Indian, or trader, but as the weeks went by the stock of bacon diminished with alternating supply while the refuse increased in proportion. Now the potato sack seemed filling up with rubbish, skin and the potatoes went fast er than he ate them.

One day returning suddenly to the cabin for a forgotten implement, he surprised a creature in the act of dragging a candle into a hole which Robb had supposed to be secretly stopped, and the cause of the disappearance of his supplies became apparent. But the steady increase of sticks and stones was still a puzzle to him until he recalled some of the queer tales told to him by names of the trade rats that are said to be born with a sense of justice and armed help trying to do the square thing.

Without stopping to theorize, he determined to see the master rat, to speak his mind, and when he went to his nest the next day he placed a scumpling piece of bacon right on the stump that served him as a platform, laying the candle stick alongside. When he came back at night the bacon was gone, and in its place was a stone. Day after day he repeated the experiment until it became a habit with him to put a comuntion or griddle cake or a bit of bacon or potato skin upon this stump, and invariably to find at night a chip or twig or pebble in place of the vanished scrap of food. It was a sort of ledger in which the balance always showed on the wrong side of the ledger, but by keeping his provisions in a securely latched locker of his own construction and allowing the rat-hole to remain open, he not only preserved his rations from misdestitution, but inspired the trade rat with such a sense of dependence and immunity that the big rodent made a practice of coming out of his hole in the quiet hours of candle-light, for a supplementary evening luncheon. Sitting up on his haunches, he would wink his bright black eyes and wiggle his whiskers till the patient master brought him a bit of food.

Things went on this way for months, and the trade rat, now almost tame, was Robb's only companion and distraction in many a lonely hour. All this time he was getting no gold to speak of; his supplies were nearly gone, and the prospects were decidedly discouraging.

One morning—a clear, crisp California morning—Horace Robb put in the customary place on the stump a small fragment from his fast emptying larder and started out in search of

of moderate desires all the days of his life.

Some men would have lingered at the scene of such a success, searching for another golden pocket, but only half of Horace Robb's ambition was achieved—the gold was but the means to an end. And so, as fast as his sturdy limbs could carry him, he hastened to the outer world.

When he reached Sacramento he found a deuced letter from her. Anxiously he skimmed the passages in which she dwelt upon her long period of patient waiting and he turned white when he reached the announcement of her marriage with another. And this is why the discoverer of the "Trade Rat Mine" returned to that lonely cabin on a wild affluent of the Feather river and why the great trade rat, under its dome of glass, is now, in the old man's frozen winter—as it was in his last springtime—the sole companion there.

Literary Treasures Lost.

Perhaps the largest and most valuable of literary treasures the world has lost was the Alexandrian library. The collection, the most remarkable of the ancient world, is said to have amounted to the most flourishing period 100,000 or according to others, 300,000 manuscripts. Its royal founder collected from all nations their choicer compositions. We are told that one of his successors went so far as to refuse to supply the Athenians with wheat until they had given him the original manuscripts of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. When Julius Caesar laid siege to the city the greater portion of this library was destroyed by fire. It was later replaced by the collection presented to Queen Cleopatra by Marc Antony, but it was not destined to endure long. When Emperor Theodosius the Great in 391 A. D. ordered the destruction of all heathen temples within the Roman empire the Christians, led by Archbishop Theophilus, did not spare that of Jupiter in which were kept the literary treasures. From this general destruction about 4,000 manuscripts escaped only to be buried in 400 A. D. by the Saracens under the caliph Omar.

An Old-Time Quack.

In the right hand, it is a poor root that will not work both ways. An old quack doctor according to the Washburn correspondent of the Boston Herald, was once called to see a boy who had chills and fever.

He proceeded to scratch the bark off a root, and put some in one glass of water and some in another glass of water.

Give the medicine in this glass for the chills, he then said to the lad's mother, but give this in the other glass when the fever comes on.

"But doctor," the mother protested, "it is exactly the same in both glasses."

"Oh, not at all," declared the quack.

"But I say you scrape the bark off the same root and put it in each glass."

Yes, admitted the quack smoothly, but you didn't see how I done it, my dear lady. This for the chills, I scrape off the root and that makes it high cockalorum. This for the fever, I scrape down on the root, and that makes it low cockalorum.

Mixed Stocks in Trade.

The complex functions of drug stores have long ceased to be novel persons go into drug stores ready to ask for almost anything and confident that they will be served. One druggist who has a store up near Columbia university says his stock of crackers is one of the most profitable investments, because students seem to prefer to go to him rather than to a grocer, although they pay more for crackers to him.

But when cigar stores no longer the use of tobacco, pipes, cigars and smokables generally, it still seems a little odd. Some cigar stores have taken up a side line of watches, which is about as odd a thing as a store of the kind might be expected to do.

An Interviewer Balked.

What do you think of the platform?

"It's a fine platform," answered the candidate.

But you have your personal opinion about some parts of it?

None whatever. A platform is especially designed to relieve a man in my position from the necessity of having personal opinions.—Washington Star.

Actresses Who Married Well.

Marrages between English actresses and men of a high social position began in the eighteenth century. If no notable Theres was Lavinia Fenton, the Polly Peacock of Gay's Beggar's Opera, who became duchess of Bolton; there was Miss Farren, who married Lord Derby; Miss Brunton, who became Lady Craven not long before Lord Thurlow married Miss Bolton, Earl of Peterborough, who married

Anastasia Robinson, the singer, and kept the marriage secret until a few days before his death in St. James' palace, when he assembled his relatives and friends and publicly acknowledged the woman to whom he owed the best and happiest hours of his life, a tardy act of justice that caused the lady to swoon away.

Flattery is the tribute that vanity exacts from friendship.



MAKE CHOICE HARD

SEASON'S STYLES ARE BEWILDERING TO SHOPPERS.

Many Modes Struggling for Supremacy, Without an Acknowledged Leader—Striped Fabrics to Be Employed as Trimming.

The woman shopping bound needs to have her nerves steady and her head clear. This is a season to undo the one and unsettle the other.

It is a season of bewildering perils, hopelessly commingled with indescribable results. And it is a season



House Gown of Black and White Marquise.

of dismaying extravagance in quantities and prices.

Last season the princess gown for house wear and the plaited skirt, with cutaway coat, led all other designs. This year there seems absolutely no

CANDY FOR THE CHILDREN.

Eaten After Meal Time, It Is Not Considered Injurious.

While opinions differ as to whether or not a child should be allowed to eat candy, every one agrees that the time that the candy should be eaten if it is eaten at all, is after meal time. The majority of doctors agree however, that a little candy now and then after dinner will not hurt a child. Molasses candy, a peppermint or two, will not harm a child if eaten in moderation and when the stomach is not empty. The mother can give her "little tots" a treat once in awhile by making candy at home for them. Children should be told that cheap candy is impure and bad for them and requested not to buy it if they wish to spend their pennies on candy. Do not forbid them to eat it, for you know "forbidden fruit is sweetest" to all of us, and a child cannot be blamed for wanting the candy which he has been commanded not to eat.

Gored Skirts.

Gored skirts are steadily in favor this season and gradually gain the day over the plaited, although there is a variety of plaited skirts being worn. There is the triple plait at each gore, the shallow plait all around the waist, and the box plait for the bordered goods.

Just now the plain gored skirt seems bare and untrimmed to the uneducated eye; nevertheless, there is a constant demand for trimming bands, tucks in the bottom and buttons to reconceive one to the plain gored skirt.

There are new white flounces that every woman will like. They come in hair lines of black, blue, brown, and Roman stripes. For odd skirts these are made circular or gored with wide hem.

The New Barrettes.

The new barrettes in bowknot, formed of shell and amber, are extremely pretty.

These useful little accessories are much larger, both in length and width, than those used formerly. The jeweled barrettes for evening wear are aglow with artificial gems, and nothing seems to be too elaborate for formal occasions.

The dainty shell barrettes for day wear are exceedingly smart and entirely practical.

leader, but a struggle for supremacy among a dozen modes, each of which is equally trying to the needle of the inexperienced home sewer.

The directoire influence, however, is making itself felt, and this in combination with certain classic or Greek lines that are hard to attain. Undoubtedly the straight lines prevail, everything has a slimpy, sleeky look that unless carefully and artistically attained is absolutely dowdy, and all styles are calculated to strike terror to the heart of the stout woman.

Plain satiny silks and satins are offered for costumes to be worn for calling. A new corded silk called cordon beige, not unlike an ottoman weave, is very popular for coat collars, the long, shapeless directoire or Louis collars.

Chiffon mousseline, marquisette and new cashmere silks, the latter looking like lovely old cashmere shawls, with a satin sheen, are in great demand. Some bordered goods are still shown, but in different designs from those offered this summer, the pattern now being in flowers so woven as to simulate hand-painting.

Practically no suitings are shown except for what are known as strictly tailored costumes. Everything for home wear and calling, receptions, etc., is either in silk or with so much silk combined with the wool that the latter is invisible.

A marked feature of the fall open this has been the long sleeve, which modistes are doing their best to force upon the American woman. Even some of the decollete gowns are accompanied by the regulation Bernhardt sleeve, crinkly, soft and long enough to come clear down over the knuckles.

"Olympian" Favors.

The return of the conquering athlete has been made an occasion for feasting, and a novel favor designed for such festivities is the "Olympian." It shows an athlete ready for the fray. He stands five inches high on the cover of a small box filled with candy. Another appropriate favor is the "Horn." This is in the form of a stem covered with green paper topped by a large rose in pink, white or red. The horn is blown from the end of the stem. Price, ten cents each.

WOULD DELIGHT SMALL GIRL

Charming Little Dress Designed to Make Up in Light Material.

Here is a very charming little dress one that would, of course, need to be made in a thin material. Jap silk is used for this.

The skirt is turned up with a hem of silk embroidery, and four tufts about three-quarters-inch wide are made about it. It is gathered round the waist, where a band of silk embroidery is used as a waistband; wide



ribbon is threaded through and tied in a bow at the back. The gathered front and backs are set into a shaped band of embroidery, which also trims the edges of kimono sleeves.

The underslip is of silk embroidery. Mushroom hat trimmed with a puffed crown and ribbons.

Materials required: Five yards silk 36 inches wide, 6 yards embroidery, 2 yards piece embroidery, 4 yards ribbon.

Baby's Toys.

Some vigorous babies have a little trick of throwing their playthings out of reach, and then crying pitifully for them to be restored to them.

If baby indulges in this habit, just tie a ribbon round his waist, and to this attach his playthings by means of long strings. He will then soon discover that he can easily regain possession of whichever toy he desires by dragging at the right string.